**MARYLAND’S DIFFERENCES AMONG ASSESSMENTS CHART FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

The following chart illustrates the differences between the MSA, HSA, Mod-HSA and the Alt-MSA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>HSA</th>
<th>Mod-HSA</th>
<th>Alt-MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSESSMENT</strong></td>
<td>Grade level content standards.</td>
<td>Course level content standards.</td>
<td>Course level content standards that incorporate variation in test delivery to meet the specific learning characteristics of the student. Examples include: Test items with fewer and shorter reading passages, shorter or less complex questions and test items.</td>
<td>May include reduced coverage and/or simplification of grade-level content standards. Portfolio format permits variation/customization of test content for individual student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELIGIBLE STUDENT POPULATION</strong></td>
<td>Student accessing the general education curriculum, and receiving special education services. Grades 3-8</td>
<td>Student accessing the general education curriculum, and receiving special education services.</td>
<td>Student receiving special education services and meets <strong>ALL</strong> four Mod-HSA eligibility criteria.</td>
<td>Student receiving special education services and meets <strong>ALL</strong> six Alt-MSA eligibility criteria. Grades 3-8 and grade 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STATE GUIDELINES DEFINE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS</strong></td>
<td>Student with a disability who can take the regular assessment with accommodations.</td>
<td>Student with a disability who can take the regular assessment with accommodations.</td>
<td>Student whose disability has precluded him/her from achieving proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence of the student’s performance and whose progress is such that, even if significant growth occurs, the student’s IEP Team is reasonably certain that the student will not achieve course-level proficiency within the year covered by the IEP.</td>
<td>Student with the <strong>most</strong> significant cognitive disability. IEP Team, which includes the parent, makes the decision regarding the appropriate assessment in which the student will participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTENT STANDARDS ON WHICH THE TEST IS BASED</strong></td>
<td>On grade-level content</td>
<td>On course-level content</td>
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<td>Emerging or readiness grade-level content standards</td>
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**CONTENT STANDARDS ON WHICH THE TEST IS BASED**

- **On grade-level content**
- **On course-level content**
- Student accessing the general education curriculum, and receiving special education services.
- Student whose disability has precluded him/her from achieving proficiency, as demonstrated by objective evidence of the student’s performance and whose progress is such that, even if significant growth occurs, the student’s IEP Team is reasonably certain that the student will not achieve course-level proficiency within the year covered by the IEP.
- Student with the **most** significant cognitive disability.
- IEP Team, which includes the parent, makes the decision regarding the appropriate assessment in which the student will participate.
MARYLAND'S DIFFERENCES AMONG ASSESSMENTS CHART FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The following chart illustrates the differences between the MSA, HSA, Mod-HSA and the Alt-MSA.

**MSA**
- A grade-level academic achievement standard defines a level of "proficient" performance equivalent to grade-level achievement on the State's regular assessment.
- Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced); cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level.
- Assessments are defined by grade and content, as the standards are based on grade-level content acquisition.
- Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives.

**HSA**
- A grade-level academic achievement standard defines a level of "proficient" performance equivalent to grade-level achievement on the State's regular assessment.
- Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced); cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level.
- Assessments are defined by course-level content, as the standards are based on end-of-course content acquisition.
- Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives.

**Mod-HSA**
- A modified academic achievement standard is aligned to grade-level content standards for the grade/course in which a student is enrolled and is challenging for an eligible student, but may be less difficult than regular course achievement standards.
- Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced); cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level.
- Assessments are defined grade-by-grade or (as in the case of the HSA), content-by-content, as the standards are based on end-of-course content acquisition.
- Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives.

**Alt-MSA**
- An alternate academic achievement standard is an expectation of performance that differs in complexity from a grade-level achievement standard, usually based on a very limited sample of content that is linked to, but does not fully represent grade-level content.
- Achievement standards include 3 levels of performance (basic, proficient and advanced); cut scores that distinguish one level from another, and descriptors of the content-based competencies associated with each level.
- Assessments are defined by grade and by content acquisition, as determined by the student's Test Examiner Team.
- Must include annual measurable IEP goals and benchmarks or short-term objectives.
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<td>Selected responses, Brief Constructed Responses (BCRs), and Extended Constructed Responses (ECRs).</td>
<td>Selected responses.</td>
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<td>Portfolio of evidence that demonstrates the student’s attainment of targeted mastery objectives in Reading, Mathematics, and Science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student taking the MSA is pursuing a Maryland High School Diploma.</td>
<td>A student taking the HSA is pursuing a Maryland High School Diploma.</td>
<td>A student taking the Mod-HSA is pursuing a Maryland High School Diploma.</td>
<td>A student taking the Alt-MSA is pursuing a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion.</td>
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